

THE PHANTOM

created by LEE FALK

"THE AVIATRIX"

PART ONE OF TWO

WRITTEN BY BEN RAAB

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INKED BY PAT QUINN

AND KEN WHEATON

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SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PHANTOM CONSULTANTS

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AND ED RHOADES

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Jnx_Scanz_HaCsA !!!



THE PHANTOM™

Ben Raab
Pat Quinn
Ken Wheaton



...AND ON YOUR LEFT, MR. GAINES, YOU'LL SEE WE'RE ABOUT TO CRUISE OVER THE ISLE OF LUNTOK -



-WHICH MEANS WE SHOULD BE TOUCHING DOWN AT MAWITAAAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN LESS THAN AN HOUR, RIGHT ON SCHEDULE FOR THE SUMMIT.

THANK YOU, CAPTAIN. NICE TO KNOW AT LEAST ONE EMPLOYEE ON MY PAYROLL UNDERSTANDS THE MEANING OF A DEADLINE.

MILLER, I BUILT G-TECH FROM A GARAGE HOBBY TO A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR CONGLOMERATE BY PREDICTING TRENDS AND STAYING TEN STEPS AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION.

MR. GAINES, SIR, WE HAD NO IDEA HUGHES SOFTWARE WAS GOING TO RELEASE THEIR NEW OPERATING SYSTEM BEFORE CHRISTMAS -

IT'S THE FOUNDATION UPON WHICH THIS COMPANY'S CONTINUED SUCCESS RESTS. UPON WHICH IT DEPENDS...

IF MY BRAIN POWER IS GOING TO BE TIED UP THE NEXT THREE WEEKS HELPING REJUVENATE FLAGGING AFRICAN ECONOMIES, I NEED TO KNOW THAT FOUNDATION IS SECURE IN MY ABSENCE.

BECAUSE IF OUR STOCK DROPS EVEN A FRACTION OF A POINT...



...YOU'RE ALL FIRED.

CLIK

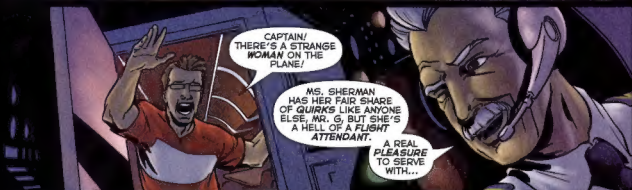


THE HELL WAS THAT?

UH, MR. GAINES, SIR?



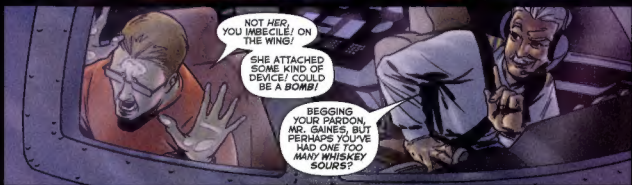
HOLY...



CAPTAIN!
THERE'S A STRANGE
WOMAN ON THE
PLANE!

MS. SHERMAN
HAS HER FAIR SHARE
OF QUIRKS LIKE ANYONE
ELSE, MR. G, BUT SHE'S
A HELL OF A FLIGHT
ATTENDANT.

A REAL
PLEASURE
TO SERVE
WITH...



NOT HER,
YOU IMBECILE! ON
THE WING!

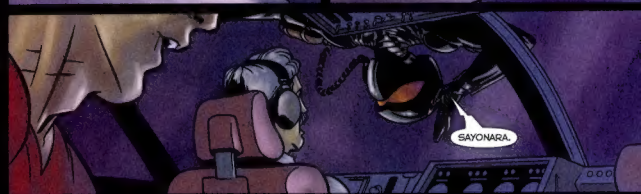
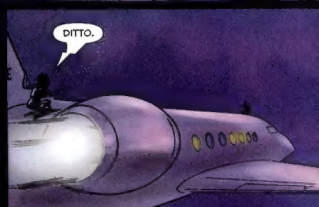
SHE ATTACHED
SOME KIND OF
DEVICE! COULD
BE A BOMB!

BEGGING
YOUR PARDON,
MR. GAINES, BUT
PERHAPS YOU'VE
HAD ONE TOO
MANY WHISKEY
SOURS?



IF I'M
DRUNK-

HOLY
CATS...





deet



DESCENT
RESISTANCE
APPARATUS
DEPLOYED...



FOUR
DOWN -

- ONE
TO GO...

GET
THIS DAMN THING
ON THE GROUND!
QUICK! BEFORE IT
BLOWS!

I CAN'T!
THE CONTROLS ARE
JAMMED!

DRIP

??!

WHAT
THE HELL IS
THAT?

TSSSS
SSSS

SSSS
SSSS

GAK

KOFF

URK!

"HEY, LEE... YOU GET
AUDIO CONFIRMATION
FROM FLIGHT GAMMA
TANGO ONE YET?"





STEPHEN
GAINES'S JET?
ABOUT A HALF-
HOUR AGO,
RAY.



SHOULD
BE TOUCHING
DOWN ANY MINUTE
NOW, MATTER OF
FACT. RIGHT ON
SCHEDULE.

SO, NO
DISTRESS
SIGNAL?

NOPE.

THEN,
WE HAVE A
PROBLEM.



TWO MINUTES
AGO, RADAR TRACKED
THEM ON A FIRM IN-BOUND
COURSE. THEN, ALL OF SUDDEN,
NO WARNING, THEY DEVIATED
FROM THEIR ESTABLISHED
FLIGHT PLAN.

SEE,
THAT'S THE
PROBLEM. ONE
SECOND I HAD
A BLIP -

WHERE
TO?



-NOW
I GOT
SQUAT.



...FOR THOSE OF YOU JUST JOINING US... SOFTWARE WUNDERKIND AND G-TECH FOUNDER, STEPHEN GAINES, HAS MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEARED SOMEWHERE OVER THE INDIAN OCEAN--



- AS HAS KENICHI TANASE, C.E.O. OF JAPAN'S KUROSAWA PHARMACEUTICAL LABORATORIES -



- CLAUDETTE TAUTOU, C.F.O. OF SWITZERLAND'S CREDIT CHEVALIER -



- AND JAMAL IBN-SAUD, PRESIDENT OF KUWAIT PETROL..



ALL FOUR WERE EN ROUTE TO THE "THIRD WORLD, FIRST STEP" ECONOMIC STIMULATION SUMMIT BEING HELD IN BANGALLA ON BEHALF OF SEVERAL AFRICAN NATIONS CURRENTLY SUFFERING DIRE FISCAL CRISES...

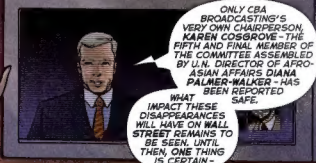
THOUGH INTERNATIONAL AUTHORITIES HAVE ISSUED NO STATEMENTS ABOUT POSSIBLE TERRORIST INVOLVEMENT, WITH TARAKIMO REBEL ALI GUTAALE STILL AT LARGE SOMEWHERE IN THAT REGION, SUSPICION IS HIGH.*



* AS SEEN IN PHANTOM #2.

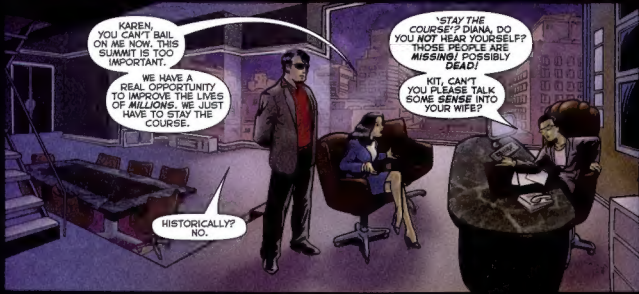


I'M NOT GOING.



ONLY CBA BROADCASTING'S VERY OWN CHAIRPERSON, KAREN COSGROVE - THE FIFTH AND FINAL MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ASSEMBLED BY U.N. DIRECTOR OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS DIANA PALMER-WALKER - HAS BEEN REPORTED SAFE.

WHAT IMPACT THESE DISAPPEARANCES WILL HAVE ON WALL STREET REMAINS TO BE SEEN. UNTIL THEN, ONE THING IS CERTAIN -



KAREN, YOU CAN'T BAIL ON ME NOW. THIS SUMMIT IS TOO IMPORTANT.

WE HAVE A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF MILLIONS. WE JUST HAVE TO STAY THE COURSE.

HISTORICALLY? NO.

'STAY THE COURSE'? DIANA, DO YOU NOT HEAR YOURSELF? THOSE PEOPLE ARE MISSING! POSSIBLY DEAD!

KIT, CAN'T YOU PLEASE TALK SOME SENSE INTO YOUR WIFE?

BUT, SHE
HAS A POINT,
DIANA.

UNTIL WE KNOW
WHAT'S REALLY GOING
ON AND WHO IS BEHIND THIS,
THERE'S NO POINT RISKING
ANYONE ELSE'S LIFE
UNNECESSARILY.

THE U.N.
MADE A PROMISE TO
HELP THOSE COUNTRIES,
KIT. WE CAN'T BACK
OUT NOW.

DIANA,
WE'VE BEEN FRIENDS
SINCE COLLEGE. HAVE
YOU EVER KNOWN ME
TO NOT KEEP
MY WORD?

CBA WON'T
RENEGE ON THE
DONATION. FIRST STEP
CAN HAVE THE
MONEY...

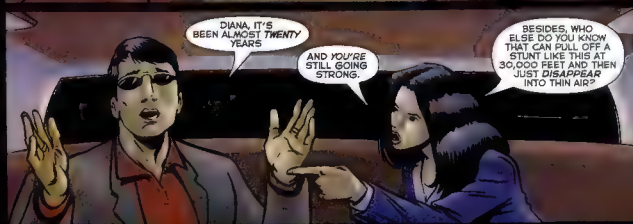
IT'S NOT
JUST ABOUT MONEY.
IT'S THE KNOWLEDGE
AND EXPERIENCE YOU
FIVE BRING TO THE
TABLE.

THAT'S WHAT'S
REALLY GOING TO HELP
US MAKE A DIFFERENCE
OVER THERE.

I WAS
SCHEDULED TO
LEAVE ON CBA'S
PRIVATE JET THIS
MORNING.

THERE
WAS SOME TECHNICAL
GLITCH. MY FLIGHT GOT
DELAYED UNTIL
TOMORROW.

THANK GOD...





"TWICE OUR PATHS
HAVE CROSSED."

"WHETHER IT BE THEIR
UNIQUE BRAND OF
AIRBORNE PIRACY--"

"--OR RISKING A POTENTIAL
INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT FOR
THE SAKE OF PROFIT BY TRYING
TO ABDUCT A HIGH-RANKING
GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL--"

"--BOTH ENCOUNTERS PROVED
THESE BLACK WIDOWS ARE AS
DANGEROUS AS THEY ARE
BEAUTIFUL."



"I'LL SAY,
DIDN'T ONE
OF THEM FALL
IN LOVE WITH
YOU?"

"ACTUALLY,
I SEEM TO RECALL
A FEW BEING TAKEN
BY MY CHARMS..."



"I WAS
TALKING
ABOUT THAT
BRUNETTE."

"SALA.
NEVER
THOUGHT I'D SEE
HER AGAIN..."







I SUPPOSE SKYJACKING FALLS UNDER THE "PIRACY, CRUELTY AND INJUSTICE" CATEGORY. WHAT WILL YOU DO?

BEAT THEM AT THEIR OWN GAME. I'LL USE COSGROVE'S LEARJET AS BAIT. THEY'LL BOARD THE PLANE EXPECTING TO FIND HER. INSTEAD, THEY'LL FIND ME.

THAT'S ASSUMING AN AWFUL LOT, HON. LAST TIME YOU FACED THE SKY BAND WAS BEFORE WE WERE EVEN OFFICIALLY DATING, LET ALONE MARRIED

THIS COULD BE A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT GANG.



TRUST ME, DIANA. I KNOW HOW THEY OPERATE.

THEY CORRAL THEIR PREY IN MID-AIR... BOARD THE PLANE... BULLY THE PASSENGERS INTO SURRENDERING THEIR VALUABLES... AND FLY AWAY WITH THEIR ILL-GOTTEN GAINS.

EXCEPT IN THEIR LATEST HEIST THE "GAINES" IN QUESTION WAS AN ACTUAL PERSON, NOT CASH OR JEWELRY.

SEEMS THEY'VE TWEAKED THEIR M.O. SOME.



HMNN... HAVE TO RETHINK MY STRATEGY.

LUCKY FOR YOU, SWEETHEART -



- I ALREADY HAVE



HAVE A
SAFE FLIGHT, MS
COSGROVE

THANK YOU,
HAROLD.



PRINCESS
ONE TO SKY QUEEN...
THE PAWV IS EN ROUTE
TO THE AIRPORT.
WE ARE GO.

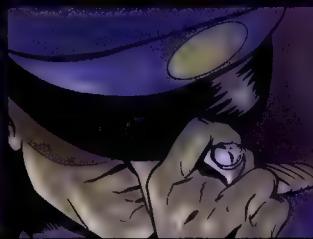


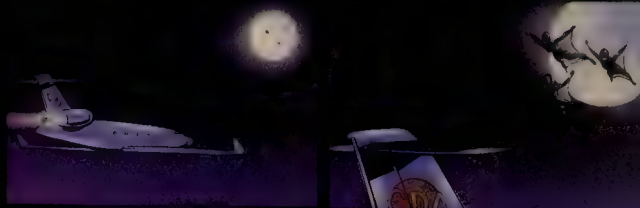
COPY THAT. PROCEED
TO THE RENDEZVOUS
FOR INTERCEPTION

ON MY
WAY



WELCOME
ABOARD, MS.
COSGROVE...







PRINCESS ONE
TO SKY QUEEN, DO
YOU COPY?

GO AHEAD,
PRINCESS...



WE'RE GOOD TO
GO. YOU MAY ASSUME
CONTROL.

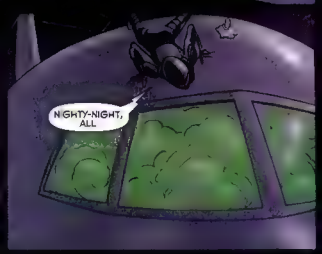
BRACE
YOURSELVES, LADIES...
ESTABLISHING SATELLITE
CONNECTION... ACTIVATING
REMOTE MANUAL
OVERRIDE...



AILERONS RESPONSIVE...
INITIATING COURSE
REDIRECTION...



SKY QUEEN TO
PRINCESS TWO... TIME TO
ROCK-A-BYE BABY...



NIGHTY-NIGHT,
ALL



WHAT A RUSH!
THESE MODIFIED
WINGSUITS ARE
AMAZING!

DAG IS
MINIMAL... MANEUVERABILITY
IS ENHANCED TEN-FOLD... SKY
QUEEN'S REALLY OUTDONE
HERSELF THIS TIME.



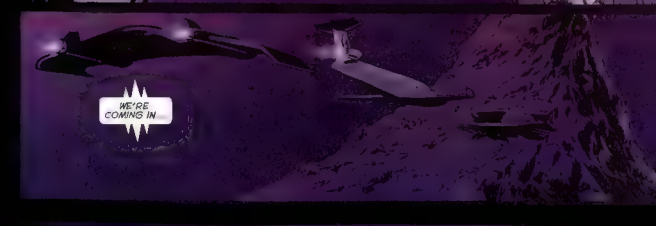
HEAR THAT
BOSS?

THE COMPLIMENTS ARE
ALL YOURS, LADIES. YOU DO
YOUR PREDECESSORS
PROUD.



BESIDES, IT'S NOT THE
GEAR THAT GETS THE JOB
DONE. IT'S THE WOMAN.

NOW GET INSIDE
AND PREP THE HANGAR
FOR ARRIVAL.



WE'RE
COMING IN



IN ADDITION TO
THEIR EXPERTISE IN BANKING,
SOFTWARE, PHARMACEUTICALS,
FUEL, PRODUCT ON AND MEDIA, EACH
MEMBER OF THE FIRST STEP COMMITTEE
HAS PLEDGED A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION
OF \$200 MILLION ON BEHALF OF
THEIR RESPECTIVE
COMPANIES.

THESE
OH-SO GENEROUS
DONATIONS ARE BUYING
THEM EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS
TO THE NEW MARKETS
THIS SUMMIT SEEKS
TO CREATE.



A MORE THAN
EQUITABLE BOUNTY IN
EXCHANGE FOR THEIR
LIVES, I'D SAY.



SO...
ONE BILLION
DOLLARS...

SPLIT FOUR
WAYS.

NOT BAD
FOR A DAY'S
WORK.



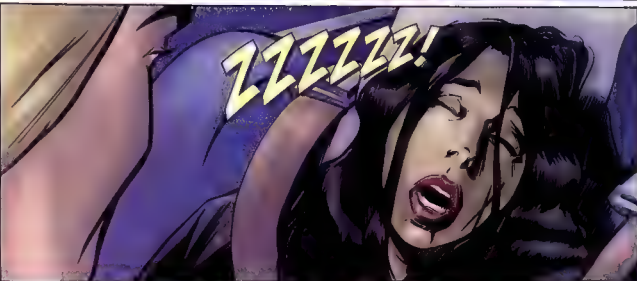
YES, BUT
BEFORE WE START
COUNTING OUR
MONEY...



"- IT'S TIME MS. COSGROVE JOINED HER FELLOW HOSTAGES."



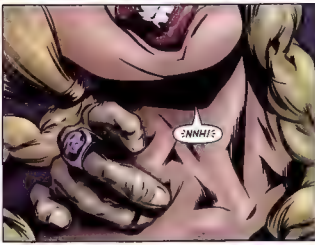
?!?



ZZZZZZ!



YOU WERE EXPECTING SOMEONE ELSE?



:NNHIE

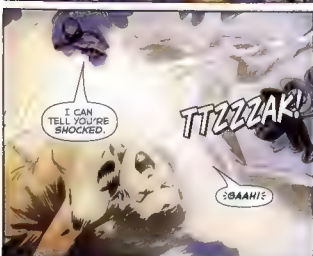
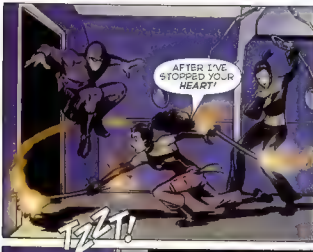


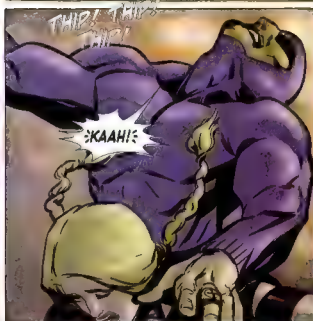
AISHA... MIHO... SEE WHAT'S TAKING ZOPHIA SO LONG.

HELP HER DEPOSIT MS. COSGROVE AND PILOT IN THE CELLBLOCK AND MEET ME IN THE CONTROL ROOM.

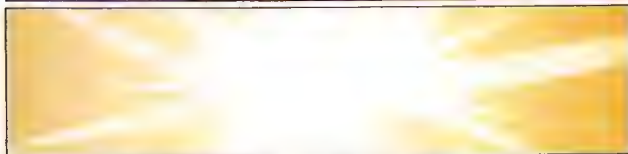
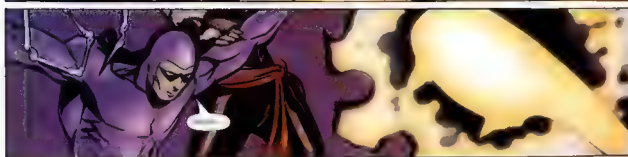
YES, SKY QUEEN













MIGHT HAVE
TO... RECONSIDER
THAT... NO HITTING
POLICY.



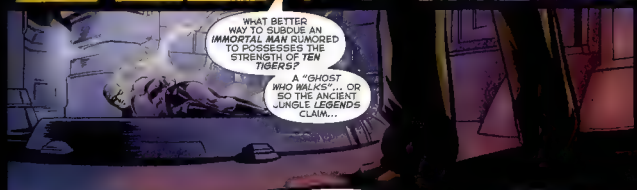
BUT FIRST
:RNH: I GOTTA GET
OUT OF HERE AND FIND
DIANA AND :HNH:
THE OTHERS...



YAAAAHH!

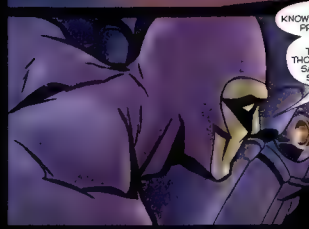


ENOUGH.
WITH THE ELECTRICITY
A-READY.



WHAT BETTER
WAY TO SUBDUCE AN
IMMORTAL MAN RUMORED
TO POSSESSES THE
STRENGTH OF TEN
TIGERS?

A "GHOST
WHO WALKS"... OR
SO THE ANCIENT
JUNGLE LEGENDS
CLAIM...

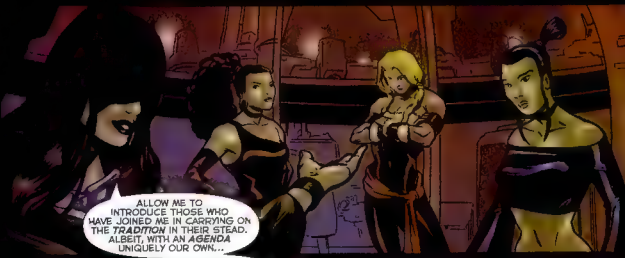


NICE TO
KNOW MY REPUTATION
PRECEDES ME.

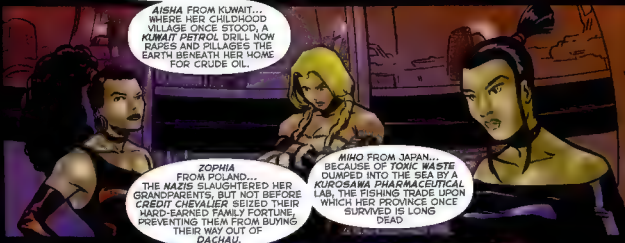
YOURS DOES,
TOO, BY THE WAY
THOUGH I'M SORRY TO
SAY IT'S NOT QUITE
SO FAVORABLE...



YOU REFER
TO THE ORIGINAL
SKY BAND



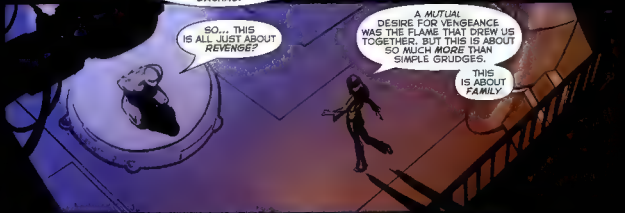
ALLOW ME TO
INTRODUCE THOSE WHO
HAVE JOINED ME IN CARRYING ON
THE *TRADITION* IN THEIR STEAD.
ALBEIT, WITH AN AGENDA
UNIQUELY OUR OWN...



AISHA FROM KUWAIT...
WHERE HER CHILDHOOD
VILLAGE ONCE STOOD, A
KUWAIT PETROL DRILL NOW
RAPES AND PILLAGES THE
EARTH BENEATH HER HOME
FOR CRUDE OIL.

ZOPHIA
FROM POLAND...
THE NAZIS SLAUGHTERED HER
GRANDPARENTS, BUT NOT BEFORE
CREDIT CHEVALIER SEIZED THEIR
HARD-EARNED FAMILY FORTUNE,
PREVENTING THEM FROM BUYING
THEIR WAY OUT OF
DACHAU.

MIHO FROM JAPAN...
BECAUSE OF TOXIC WASTE
DUMPED INTO THE SEA BY A
KUROSAWA PHARMACEUTICAL
LAB, THE FISHING TRADE UPON
WHICH HER PROVINCE ONCE
SURVIVED IS LONG
DEAD



SO... THIS
IS ALL JUST ABOUT
REVENGE?

A MUTUAL
DESIRE FOR VENGEANCE
WAS THE FLAME THAT DREW US
TOGETHER, BUT THIS IS ABOUT
SO MUCH MORE THAN
SIMPLE GRUDGES.

THIS
IS ABOUT
FAMILY



AND THAT IS
SOMETHING I KNOW
YOU VALUE ABOVE ALL
ELSE, PHANTOM-



OR
SHOULD I CALL YOU
DADDY?

TO BE CONTINUED!



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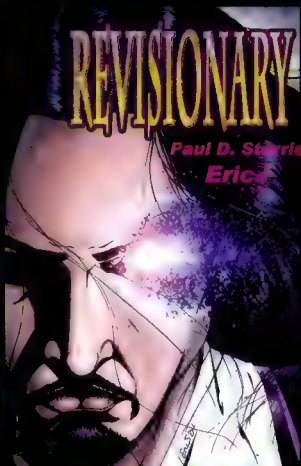


hear the screams...

body...

mind...

and soul!



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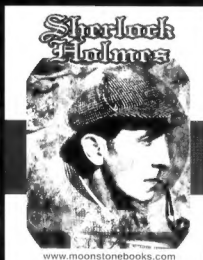
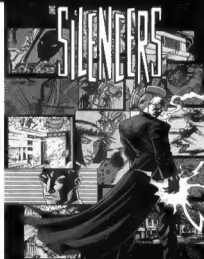
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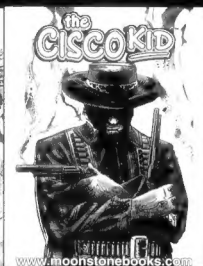
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